



# e-News From *MAIEN*street

**A Neighborhood e-Newsletter From  
Councilman Brian Maienschein**

June 2002

Volume 2, Issue 6



**Proudly Representing the  
District Five**

**Communities of:**

*Carmel Mountain Ranch*

*Mira Mesa*

*Rancho Bernardo*

*Sabre Springs*

*San Pasqual*

*Scripps Ranch*

*Sorrento Mesa*

*Sorrento Valley*

## Let's open the dam at Miramar Lake

**P**rotecting San Diego's drinking water supply is critical and should remain a top priority for local officials and statewide office holders alike, especially in the post Sept. 11 environment.

However, the measures taken to protect our region's dams and reservoirs from potential terrorist attacks should be based on common sense and implemented in a way that maximizes security while preserving recreational activity.

Case in point: the Miramar Lake Reservoir.

Since the Miramar Dam was closed to pedestrian traffic in October, my office has been contacted by a number of Scripps Ranch residents insisting that city officials must take immediate steps to reopen the dam. Unfortunately, because the California Department of Health Services is the regulating governmental entity responsible for ensuring the safety of California's water supply, the city of San Diego is required to carry out this non-negotiable directive from Sacramento to keep the path across the dam closed.

I believe DHS should strongly reconsider its order to close the bike and pedestrian path over Miramar Dam because the precautions taken by the state government to protect Miramar Dam have not only caused an inconvenience to local residents, they have created a very real and very dangerous pedestrian safety hazard, while doing little to effectively "secure" the dam from potential

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## State budget problems may impact San Diego

**W**ith the Governor's May Revise fully digested, local governments are now beginning the process of praying that the state legislature not rob their already limited coffers to bridge the almost \$25 billion budget gap in the state's budget.

And pray they should. After all, the last time the state found itself in such dire financial straits the legislature decided to balance their budget on the backs of local governments by shifting millions of dollars in property tax revenues to Sacramento. Since 1991, the state has diverted approximately \$311.2 million away from the city of San Diego.

Fortunately, the May Revise was bad, but not horrible, for San Diego. In

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## MIRAMAR DAM

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terrorist attacks.

Closing access over the dam has essentially created a bottleneck of joggers, bikers, and roller-

bladers for the thousands of Scripps Ranch families who use the five-mile path around Miramar Lake. Users are now forced to turn around at a chain



**MIRAMAR LAKE—** Each day thousands of Scripps residents use the path around the lake to walk, jog and bike.

link fence that blocks access across the dam, creating two-way traffic on this already narrow pathway.

However, we're supposed to be convinced that this directive from Sacramento to close down one of the jewels of Scripps Ranch is in our community's best interest. And why not, the flimsy chain link fence and three strands of barbed wire protecting the entrance onto the dam should do wonders in stopping terrorists from poisoning our water supply or damaging the dam. Quite simply, this flimsy fence will not protect the water supply or the dam.

While I appreciate those in Sacramento taking proactive steps to ensure San Diego has a safe water supply, any risk assessment can and should be done in a manner that balances safety with recreation and the needs of the community.

Last month I sent a letter to Governor Davis requesting him to direct the California Department of Health Services to investigate other common-sense options for providing pedestrian and recreational access across the dam at the Miramar Lake reservoir while continuing to address security con-

cerns. I have yet to receive a response from him. However, there is some good news to report. I recently requested that the Department of Health Services grant a one day reprieve from their restrictions and open the gates for the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Old Pros 10K run on July 4<sup>th</sup>. After weeks of negotiation and with the help of the city's Water Department and the community of Scripps Ranch, I'm proud to report that the dam gates will be open for the run.

Protecting Miramar Lake and other reservoirs like it from terrorist threats is indeed a crucial element in our homeland defense strategy and I fully support the overall intent of the efforts thus far. Yet, I firmly believe that realistic and workable security measures that allow for access across the dam can and should developed.

## STATE BUDGET:

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it were cuts to library grants (\$600,000), booking fees for police (\$5.2 million), a fifty percent reduction in technology grants for law enforcement (\$589,000) and another, yet not surprising, \$1.69 million shift in property taxes. Only this time the property tax revenues will be stolen from the city's redevelopment agency instead of the general fund, hampering the redevelopment efforts of downtown and San Diego's oldest neighborhoods.

San Diego was spared a fatal financial blow as the Governor did protect our Vehicle License Fee revenues, which account for 9.9% of the city's general fund. During the FY 02 state budget negotiations, the legislature agreed to a 66% reduction in the VLF, with the guarantee that the state would backfill any lost revenues to local governments. In FY 03 the city of San Diego is due over \$70 million in VLF, so any reduction in this

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## Maienschein helps cut ribbon for new 10 mile Mule Hill trail in San Pasqual Valley



The new Mule Hill Trail through the San Pasqual Valley will provide hikers, bikers and equestrian riders with unmatched scenery, while providing meaningful education about the Valley's rich historical heritage.

As a board member of the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority, I was proud to celebrate the opening of the new San Pasqual Valley Trail, also known as the Mule Hill Trail, at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 1. The Mule Hill/San Pasqual Valley Trail is a 10-mile-long multi-use trail, beginning on Sunset Drive off of Via Rancho Parkway, and ending at Brandy Canyon Road. The first 1.25 miles of the trail is hard-surfaced and suitable for users of all abilities. The trail crosses the floodplain and the San Dieguito River (via a low-flowing crossing), and ends at the old weigh station near Highland Valley Road.

After the ceremony, hikers, equestrians, and bicyclists traveled the path to the interpretative stations along the Mule Hill Trail. These interpretive stations provide information on historic resources in the valley, and

in the future will also have signage about the agricultural products grown in the San Pasqual Valley Agricultural Preserve. The vast majority of the trail is located in the San Pasqual Valley Agricultural Preserve, where trail users will be able to share in the beauty of this land maintained by local farmers.

The historical significance of the area can be explored along the trail, including the 1846 battle between American and Mexican forces, and information on the flooded town of Bernardo- the old San Diego.

The Mule Hill Trail was funded from a combination of local, state, and federal funds totaling \$1.3 million. I am very proud that our community is able to provide such recreational services for our citizens. Many volunteers worked in various capacities to bring this project to completion. Valuable projects like this make District Five a great place to live in.

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### STATE BUDGET: Continued from pg. 2

backfill account could prove to be horrific to the city's fiscal health and its ability to provide services. However, with such a large deficit in the state budget in an election year, the VLF backfill account is still fair game and a candidate for the chopping block.

As the Senate and Assembly budget conference committee continues to meet through June, I'm hopeful that our legislative delegation will do the right thing and pressure their leadership and the Governor to balance the budget in Sacramento, with Sacramento dollars, and not punish the residents of San Diego for their fiscal woes by eliminating needed funding or transferring the city of San Diego's property tax revenues.



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It's a pleasure to serve you on the San Diego City Council!!